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**ABSTRACT**

A hearing test device and method are disclosed which involve the placement of a testing probe in the ear canal of a test subject. The device analyzes responses to stimuli applied to the ear canal to determine whether the testing probe has been properly placed in the ear canal. The device may determine, for example, whether the probe is stable, whether it is sealed in the ear canal, whether the resulting volume of the ear canal is acceptable, and/or whether the stimuli delivery system is blocked in any way. If the device determines that the testing probe has been properly placed in the ear canal, the device automatically starts a hearing test without requiring any operator input.

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